

Father's Breastfeeding Support Initiative



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Professor & Director

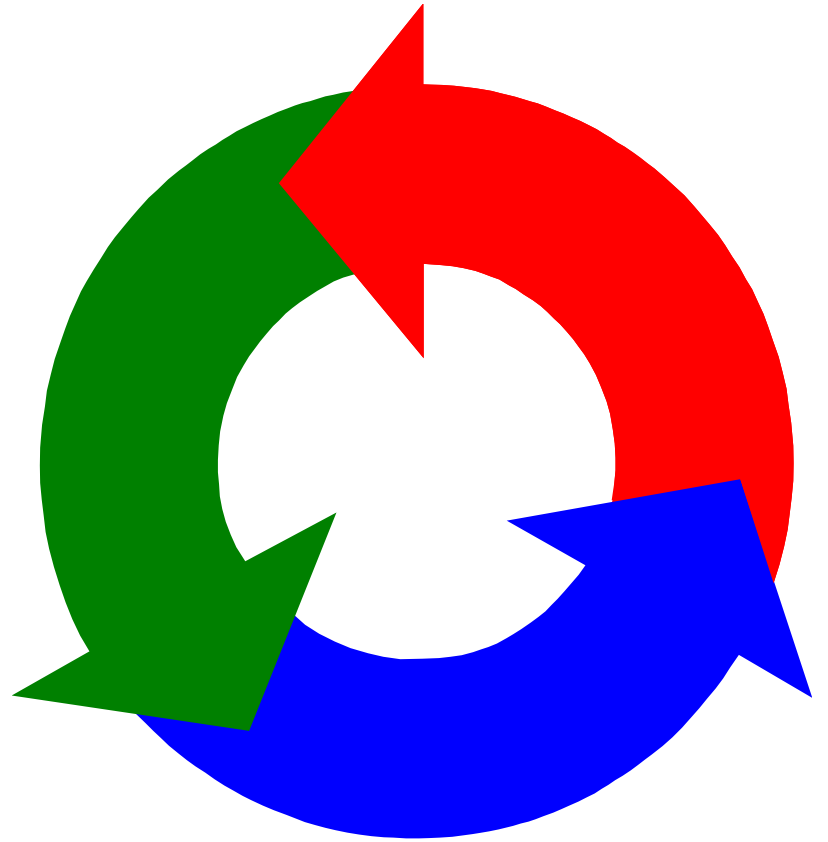
Public Health Program

Morgan State University

M. Serpa, S. Squire, C. Gibbons, A. Ekulona, J.
Rodriguez

Goal

- To increase father's support of breastfeeding

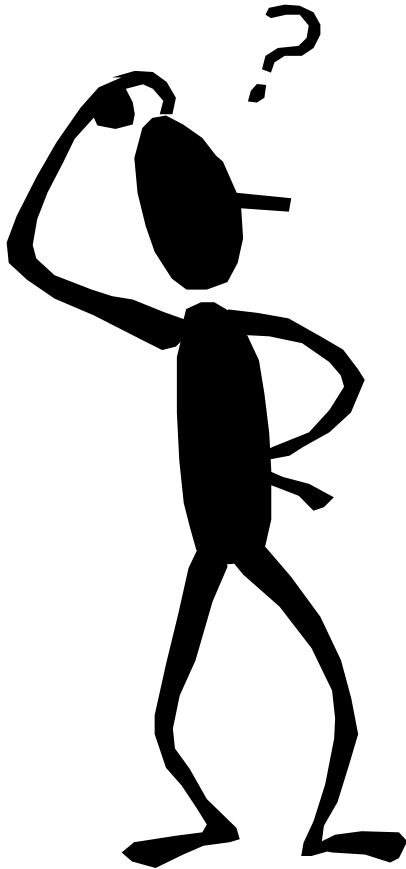




Objectives

- Objectives:
 - Inform men about breastfeeding
 - Understand the male perspective regarding breastfeeding
 - Specify things fathers can do to support breastfeeding
 - Strategies for encouraging father involvement in breastfeeding success

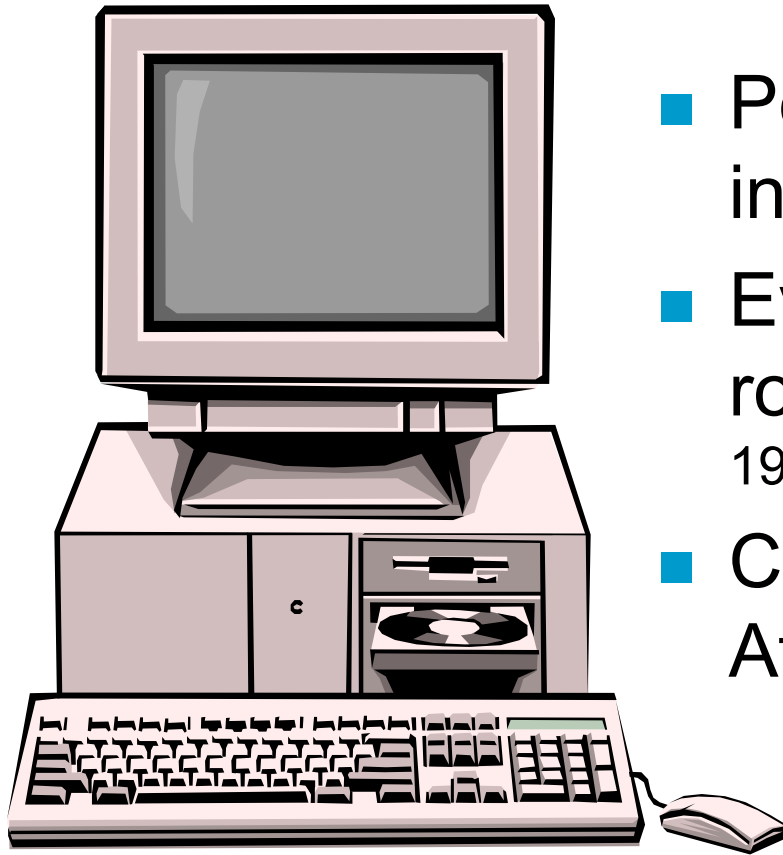
Qualitative Methodology



- Observations
- Focus groups with JHU-WIC staff
- Focus groups with :
 - partners of WIC clients
 - WIC clients + partners
 - married and unmarried
 - WIC clients

Fatherhood Role

Literature Review



- Perceptions of fatherhood in Africa
- Evolution of fatherhood roles in the US (Blankenhorn, 1988)
- Current perceptions of African American males

Fatherhood in America

- Fatherhood is a scripted role
 - Old Father
 - Sperm Father
 - Deadbeat Dad
 - Visiting Father
 - New Father





The Good Family Man

- A necessary father....not perfect but good enough to be irreplaceable.
- He is married.
- He stays around.
- He is a father on the premises.
- His children need him and he strives to give them what they need, every day.



The Good Family Man

- He knows that nothing can substitute for him. Either he is a father or his children are fatherless.
- He would never consider himself not that important to his children....
- He has not transcended his masculinity or moved beyond male roles. It would rarely occur to him to call what he does mothering or even parenting. To him, the key word is not a verb at all, but a gender specific noun,

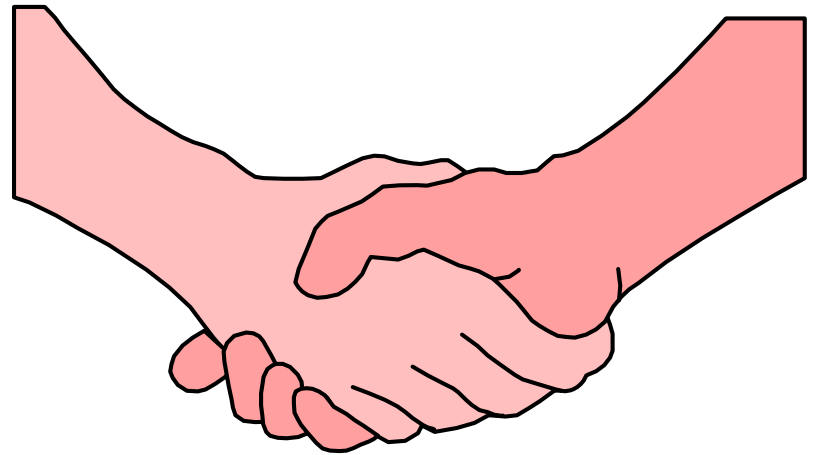
Understanding the Male Perspective



- Fathers are jealous of their infants because of the affection that infants receive from their mothers

Understanding the Male Perspective

- The prenatal period should be assessed to help couples anticipate this problem and plan how they will maintain strong family bonds

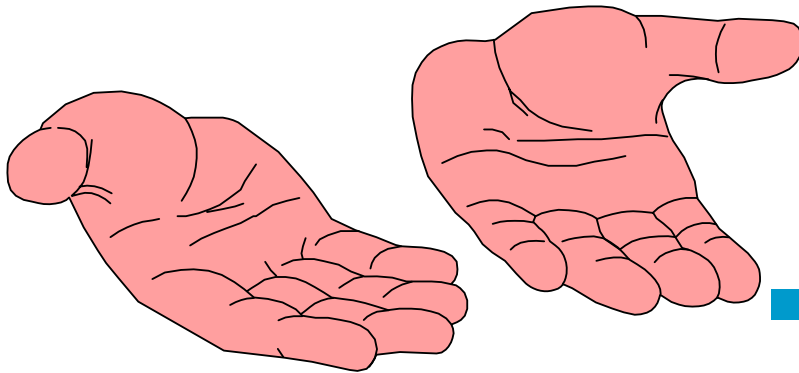


Why Should fathers be more involved in breastfeeding issues ?

- To increase commitment
- Decrease work load for mother
- Father is a role model

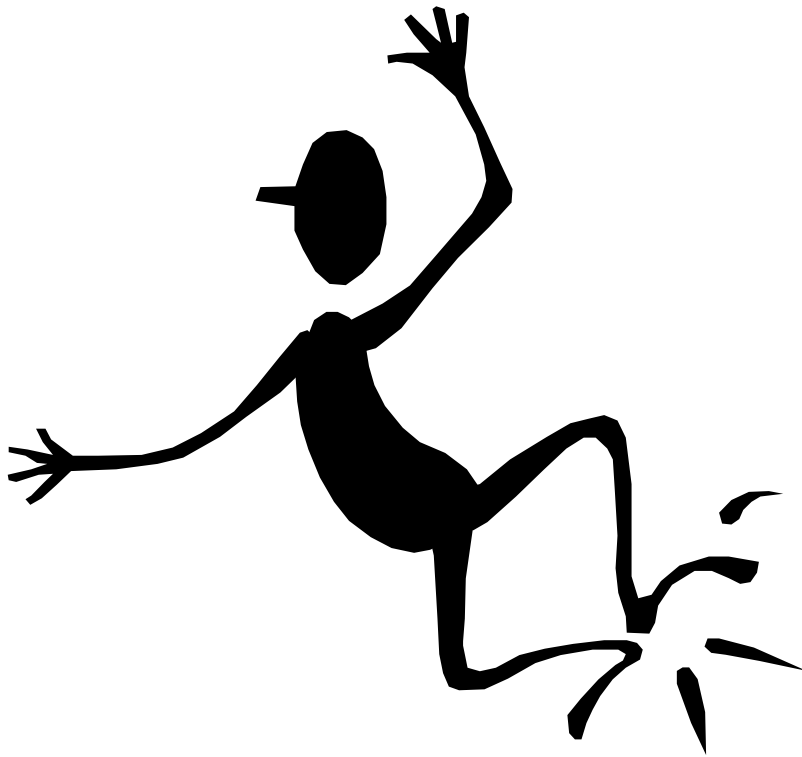


What should fathers do to support breastfeeding?

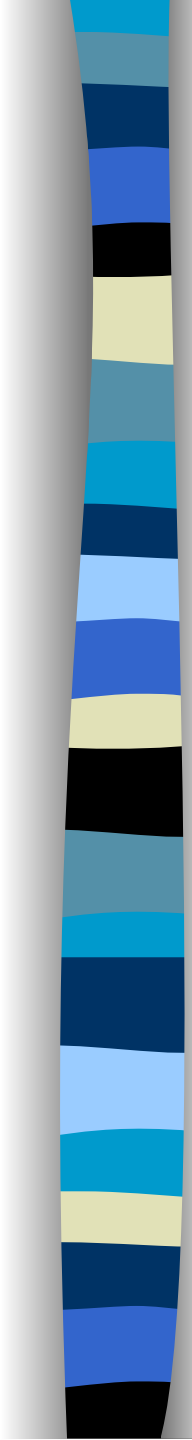


- Father support for breastfeeding is a role that needs to be scripted since it is not often seen in many communities.
- Fathers said that they did not know what to do to support breastfeeding

Things fathers can do to support breastfeeding



- Learn as much as possible about BF
- Take care of other siblings so mother can rest
- Clean the house
- Reassure mother about her decision to BF

- 
- Successful breastfeeding should be a family affair with mother and father working together





How ready are we/WIC to help fathers support breastfeeding?

A Self Assessment

- The men in our lives - how has it been (father, brothers, husband/mate, friends, relationships in the work place)
- What are my perceptions of the male role in family health promotion?
- What are my expectations for male participation in family health promotion?

Strategies for making WIC father friendly

- Staff training
- Environmental enhancements
- Programmatic inclusion
- Rewarding fathers' efforts
- Recruiting, training and hiring more male staff

